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COPY NO. 45

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD  
Washington 25, D. C.

May 13, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

SUBJECT: U.S. Food Gift Offers to People of Captive Europe

A. Purpose

If situations of famine or widespread hunger resulting from inadequate food stocks develop in captive Europe, important psychological advantages could be gained through offers by the United States to give food to the hungry people of captive Europe. It is most unlikely that the Soviet masters would permit such United States food offers to be accepted. But in the event of acceptance, important advantages would accrue because Americans observing the distribution of the food would gain direct contact with the captive peoples and word of the humanitarian action of the United States would spread throughout the Orbit. If the Soviet leaders forced the rejection of a U.S. food gift, the propaganda advantages to the free world would be very significant.

B. Policy Criteria

1. The offer should not be made unless severe food shortages exist of famine or near famine proportions resulting in widespread hunger.
2. Adequate food assistance to any nations in the free world affected by famine or drought and desiring aid from the U.S. must be assured before any offer is made to give away food to people behind the Iron Curtain.
3. The offer should be absolutely sincere, preceded by careful administrative arrangements to insure rapid delivery if the offer is accepted.

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4. The offer should be made purely on humanitarian grounds. Publicity should stress that the offer is for the benefit of the people of captive Europe.

5. To emphasize the sincerity of the offer, no political strings should be attached. If accepted, American voluntary agencies, rather than U.S. Government officials, should observe the distribution of the food.

C. Administrative Arrangements

1. The intelligence agencies of the government should be requested to watch food conditions in captive Europe very closely in order to provide sufficient advance notice of any severe hunger conditions emerging in captive Europe. It is estimated that a minimum of one month will be necessary to carry out the administrative arrangements required in advance of a food offer.

2. If intelligence indicates a serious prospective food shortage, an interagency ad hoc committee should be established to carry out the operational planning and the administrative arrangements for a food offer.

3. The ad hoc committee should meet immediately with the accredited voluntary agencies in order to obtain their cooperation. In this connection, special consideration must be given to arranging for passports, since present U.S. Government policy does not permit private American citizens to travel to certain Orbit countries.

4. Adequate stocks of food, at below market price, are currently available for purchase from the Commodity Credit Corporation. Also under Section 416 of the Agriculture Act of 1949, the Department of Agriculture has authority to give away to U.S. voluntary agencies any surplus foods in storage which may be in danger of spoilage. This means particularly dairy products, which are commodities known to be in short supply in captive Europe.

5. Legislative authority for financing an emergency food offer exists under Section 101(a)(1) (Kersten Amendment) of the Mutual

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Security Act, which provides permissive authority for the President to spend up to \$100 million for, among other things, projects that he certifies are in the interest of U.S. security for people residing in the countries of captive Europe.

6. The Mutual Security Act also provides legislative authority which would permit the financing of the shipping costs of emergency food relief projects, even though the destination is not a nation or nations participating in the Mutual Security Program.

7. Sufficiently in advance of the intended date for the food offer, appropriate top government officials should brief, in executive session, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in order to obtain their backing for the project.


8. The food offer could be made public in several ways, including a formal press release from the White House, a statement at the President's press conference, or the letters from the President to the Congressional committees certifying that the program is in the interest of U.S. security. Simultaneously with the public release of the offer, U.S. mission chiefs in captive Europe should formally present the offer to the governments to whose people the food is to be distributed.

9. An overt and covert program should be prepared to exploit fully either of the two alternatives--acceptance or rejection of the food offer.

D. Recommendation

That the Board adopt this paper as a guidance to the member agencies in the event that any time in the future the Board should determine that a food gift offer should be made to the people of one or more of the countries of captive Europe.

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Acting Director

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# ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

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